



Charlotte City Council
Housing, Safety & Community Committee
Summary
January 3, 2023

COMMITTEE AGENDA TOPICS

- I. Anti-Displacement Update (Informational)
- II. Property Tax Assistance (Discussion)

COMMITTEE INFORMATION

Committee Members Present:	Victoria Watlington (CMGC), Lawana Mayfield (CMGC); Tariq Bokhari (CMGC), Renee' Johnson (CMGC; joined meeting at approximately 4:40 p.m.); Marjorie Molina (CMGC)
Other Council Members Present:	Braxton Winston (CMGC)
Guests:	Justin Harlow, Neighborhood Equity & Stabilization (NEST) Commission Co-Chair Kim Graham, Neighborhood Equity & Stabilization (NEST) Commission Co-Chair
Staff Resources:	Reenie Askew, City Manager's Office Shawn Heath, Housing & Neighborhood Services Rebecca Hefner, Housing & Neighborhood Services
Meeting Duration:	4:00 – 5:30 PM
Video available online:	https://youtu.be/zoJ5S0StKh0?t=22045

MEETING MATERIALS

All meeting materials are available online at <https://charlottenc.legistar.com>

- 1. Presentation: Anti-Displacement Update
- 2. Presentation: Property Tax Assistance

DISCUSSION HIGHLIGHTS

City Council member Watlington called the meeting to order and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

Anti-Displacement Update

Rebecca Hefner shared information on the work being conducted around anti-displacement, including an overview of the city's anti-displacement approach, anti-displacement strategy development, update on the Staying in Place pilot program, and the activities of the NEST Commission. She explained that staff is in the first stage of analyzing the current anti-displacement approach, including synthesizing activities and information, identifying gaps, and prioritizing recommendations based on impact and effort. The proposed timeline for completing an anti-displacement strategy includes an opportunity for committee review in June 2023, with a goal of having the strategy finalized to coincide with the implementation of the UDO in 2023.

Ms. Hefner explained that the Staying in Place pilot program, as well as a ADU pilot and the NEST Commission recommendations, will help to inform a package/collection of services that can be available in any neighborhood or household in the city at-risk of displacement depending upon City Council's future decisions to invest in the services.

Property Tax Assistance

Justin Harlow and Kim Graham, Co-Chairs of the NEST Commission, presented a recommendation from the NEST Commission related to tax assistance. Mr. Harlow reminded the committee that the city currently has no tax relief program. He explained that the recommendation is in part related to the forthcoming property revaluation and

anticipated increase in property tax bills faced by residents. The NEST Commission recommends that the city create a tax assistance grant for households age 55 and over with income up to 80% of the area median income, with door-to-door outreach and canvassing in neighborhoods vulnerable to displacement. Additionally, the NEST Commission recommends that City Council consider state-level advocacy to expand eligibility of the state's homestead exemption, setting aside funds for a loan program for deferred taxes to encourage enrollment in the state's circuit breaker program, and partnering with organizations that provide financial counseling and community health resources in combination with tax assistance grants.

The committee discussed the following:

- Households younger than those age 55 and over can also be at-risk of displacement due to property taxes, for example younger single-parent households.
- Partnerships that help people connect to employment and other services are important to complement tax assistance programs.
- Identifying where estate transfers are in-process so that that this can be leveraged to increase homeownership in priority areas.
- Advocating for expansion of the state's homestead exemption program to increase eligibility in that program, and how to include this for discussion in the City Council's intergovernmental relations committee.
- Information from staff on the opportunity costs associated with this program recommendation particularly as City Council is entering the budget cycle (e.g., if City Council funds the recommended tax assistance program, what opportunity is lost [given up] to support/fund other competing priorities, along with the projected outcomes associated with each).

Kim Graham shared that the NEST Commission will bring forward a menu of strategies and recommendations that will address a number of issues related to displacement (e.g., tax assistance, workforce and job training, relocation funds, state-level advocacy, etc.). She acknowledged that City Council will have competing priorities for the city's legislative agenda, and encouraged the committee to pursue tax assistance as part of the city's legislative agenda at the state level and especially if the tax assistance program recommendation not rise to the level of funding from City Council.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will occur on February 6, 2023.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 5:30 pm.